

What are the key characteristics of each level?

The proficiency continuum consists of benchmarks that describe “what an individual can do with language at each level” (OPI Familiarization Manual, p.3). The following chart provides an overview of the key characteristics of each level of proficiency. The chart identifies differences by mode of communication: Interpretive (listening, reading, or viewing); Interpersonal (conversational exchanges either by speaking and listening, signing, or texting); or Presentational (speaking, writing, or via media).

Levels	Interpretive	Interpersonal	Presentational
Novice	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identifies main ideas 2. Comprehends by recognizing key words/phrases 3. Benefits from familiar contexts and visual support of text 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Expresses self in conversations on very familiar topics 2. Uses a variety of words, phrases, simple sentences 3. Asks highly practiced questions 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Writes words, lists 2. Writes simple sentences 3. Writes formulaic questions 4. Relies on a practiced format
Intermediate	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Comprehends main ideas and identifies some key supporting details 2. Benefits from predictable order and familiar contexts 3. Predicts meaning from context 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Can communicate by understanding and creating personal meaning 2. Can understand, ask and answer a variety of questions 3. Maintains conversation on familiar topics in the here and now 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Controls sentences/series of sentences 2. Creates with language 3. Starts to tell/retell stories 4. Provides more description 5. Shows some self-correcting/editing
Advanced	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Comprehends main ideas and supporting details 2. Comprehends narrative, descriptive, and some persuasive texts 3. Creates inferences 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Communicates in paragraph-length conversation with detail in all major time frames 2. Handles situations with an unexpected complication 3. Can paraphrase to clarify 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Supports arguments (can provide some evidence) 2. Produces paragraphs 3. Elaborates (detail/description) 4. Narrates (Multiple time frames) 5. Organizes (cohesion)